



**Lewis County Public Health & Social Services**

# **News Release**

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## **Antigen positive test results to be included with daily COVID-19 cases**

Chehalis, WA – Beginning today, Lewis County Public Health & Social Services (LCPHSS) will include antigen positive COVID-19 results in COVID-19 case counts. This will include all positive antigen cases reported since June, when the first antigen test results were reported to the Washington State Department of Health (DOH). DOH started reporting antigen positive results as “probable cases” on their Data Dashboard on December 16, 2020. The increase in cases reported today is a one-time adjustment and not a reflection of increased COVID-19 activity in Lewis County.

While antigen testing currently represents a small percentage of all COVID-19 testing in Washington, DOH anticipates an increase in the use of antigen testing in the coming months. Per DOH, about 5% of all COVID-19 cases are from antigen testing, with the other 95% from molecular testing, which includes PCR testing.

### **What are the differences between an antigen test and a PCR test?**

Antigen tests are designed to detect certain proteins that are part of the COVID-19 virus. The presence of these proteins is used to diagnose a person as “COVID-19 positive.” Antigen tests are able to be done outside of a laboratory and results can take as little as 15 minutes. Antigen tests tend to be recommended for people who have COVID-19 symptoms. On the DOH Dashboard, positive antigen tests are reported as “probable cases.” LCPHSS will also list antigen positive tests as “probable cases” in their reports.

Molecular tests look for genetic material from the virus to diagnose a person as “COVID-19 positive.” Molecular tests can take longer to produce results, but they are generally more accurate than antigen tests. Positive molecular test results are reported as “confirmed cases” on the DOH Dashboard.

People can stay informed by following the Lewis County COVID-19 web page at <https://phsscovid19.lewiscountywa.gov>, @LCPHSS on Twitter, or [www.facebook.com/lcphss](https://www.facebook.com/lcphss).

Learn more about antigen testing at: [www.doh.wa.gov/testing](https://www.doh.wa.gov/testing)

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